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A

All Ordinaries index (on the Australian stock exchanges) an index based on the weighted average of selected ordinary share prices.

allosaurus /ə'lə'sɔːsəs/ ▶ noun a large bipedal carnivorous dinosaur of the late Jurassic period. ● Genus *Allosaurus*, suborder Theropoda, order Saurischia.
– ORIGIN modern Latin, from Greek *allos* 'other' + *sauros* 'lizard'.

allosteric /ə'lə'sterɪk, -'strɪk/ ▶ adjective Biochemistry relating to or denoting the alteration of the activity of an enzyme by means of a conformational change induced by a different molecule.

allot ▶ verb (**allots**, **allotting**, **allotted**) [with obj.] give or apportion (something) to someone: *equal time was allotted to each* | [with two objs] *I was allotted a little room in the servant's block*.
– ORIGIN late 15th cent.: from Old French *aloter*, from *a-* (from Latin *ad* 'to') + *loter* 'divide into lots'.

allotment ▶ noun 1 Brit. a plot of land rented by an individual for growing vegetables or flowers. ■ US, chiefly historical a piece of land made over by the government to an American Indian.
2 [mass noun] the action of allotting something. ■ [count noun] an amount allotted to a person.

allotrope /ə'lə'trəʊp/ ▶ noun Chemistry each of two or more different physical forms in which an element can exist. Graphite, charcoal, and diamond are all allotropes of carbon.
– ORIGIN late 19th cent.: back-formation from ALLOTROPY.

allotropy /ə'lə'trəpi/ ▶ noun [mass noun] Chemistry the existence of two or more different physical forms of a chemical element.

– DERIVATIVES **allotropic** adjective.
– ORIGIN mid 19th cent.: from Greek *allotropos* 'of another form', from *allo-* 'other' + *tropos* 'manner' (from *trepein* 'to turn').

allottee ▶ noun a person to whom something is allotted, especially land or shares.

all-over ▶ adjective [attrib.] covering the whole of something: *she returned with an all-over tan*.

allow ▶ verb [with obj.] 1 let (someone) have or do something: [with obj. and infinitive] *the dissident was allowed to leave the country* | [with two objs] *she was allowed a higher profile*. ■ [with obj. and adverbial of direction] let (someone) enter a place or go in a particular direction: *the river was patrolled and few people were allowed across*. ■ declare or decide that (an event or activity) is legal or acceptable: *political advertising on television is not allowed*.

2 give the necessary time or opportunity for: *they agreed to a ceasefire to allow talks with the government* | [with obj. and infinitive] *he stopped to allow his eyes to adjust*. ■ [no obj.] (**allow for**) make provision or provide scope for: *the house was demolished to allow for road widening*. ■ [no obj.] (**allow for**) take (something) into consideration when making plans or calculations: *income rose by 11 per cent allowing for inflation*. ■ provide or set aside for a particular purpose: *allow an hour or so for driving*.

3 [reporting verb] admit the truth of; concede: [with clause] *he allowed that the penalty appeared too harsh for the crime* | [with direct speech] *'Could happen,' she allowed indifferently*. ■ [with clause] N. Amer. informal or dialect be of the opinion; assert: *Lincoln allowed that he himself could never support the man*.

– PHRASES **allow me** said when making a polite request or offering help: *please allow me to introduce myself* | *'Here, allow me,' came a woman's voice from behind him*.

– DERIVATIVES **allowedly** adverb.
– ORIGIN Middle English (originally in the senses 'commend, sanction' and 'assign as a right'): from Old French *alouer*, from Latin *allaudare* 'to praise', reinforced by medieval Latin *allocare* 'to place' (see ALLOCATE).

allowable ▶ adjective 1 allowed, especially within a set of regulations; permissible: *the loan deal has been extended to the maximum allowable three months*.

2 Brit. (of an amount of money) able to be earned or received free of tax: *tax is payable after deduction of allowable expenses*.

– DERIVATIVES **allowably** adverb.

allowance ▶ noun 1 the amount of something that is permitted, especially within a set of regulations or for a specified purpose: *your baggage allowance*. ■ Brit. an amount of money that can be earned or received free of tax: *a personal allowance*. ■ Horse Racing a deduction in the weight that a horse is required to carry in a race.

2 a sum of money paid regularly to a person to meet needs or expenses: *the elderly receive a heating allowance every winter*. ■ chiefly N. Amer. a small amount of money given regularly to a child by its parents.

3 [mass noun] archaic tolerance: *the allowance of slavery in the South*.

▶ verb [with obj.] archaic give (someone) a sum of money as an allowance.

– PHRASES **make allowance(s) for 1** take into consideration when planning something. 2 treat leniently on account of mitigating circumstances.
– ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *alouance*, from *alouer* (see ALLOW).

alloxan /ə'lɒks(ə)n/ ▶ noun [mass noun] Chemistry an acidic compound obtained by the oxidation of uric acid and isolated as an efflorescent crystalline hydrate.

● Chem. formula: C₂H₂N₂O₄.
– ORIGIN mid 19th cent.: from *all(antoin)* + *ox(alic)* + *-AN*.

alloy ▶ noun /ə'lɔɪ/ a metal made by combining two or more metallic elements, especially to give greater strength or resistance to corrosion: *an alloy of nickel, bronze, and zinc* | [as modifier] *alloy wheels*. ■ an inferior metal mixed with a precious one.

▶ verb /ə'lɔɪ/ [with obj.] mix (metals) to make an alloy: *alloying tin with copper to make bronze*.
– ORIGIN late 16th cent.: from Old French *aloi* (noun) and French *aloyer* (verb), both from Old French *aloier*, *aleier* 'combine', from Latin *alligare* 'bind'. In early use the term denoted the comparative purity of gold or silver; the sense 'mixture of metals' arose in the mid 17th cent.

all-party ▶ adjective [attrib.] Brit. involving all political parties: *the measure received all-party support*.

all-pervasive (also **all-pervading**) ▶ adjective occurring or having an effect through or into every part of something: *the all-pervasive excitement*.

all-points bulletin (abbrev.: APB) ▶ noun (in the US) a radio message sent to every officer in a police force giving details of a suspected criminal or stolen vehicle.

all-powerful ▶ adjective having complete power: *an all-powerful dictator*.

all-purpose ▶ adjective having a great many uses: *an all-purpose kitchen knife*.

all right ▶ adjective [predic.] of a satisfactory or acceptable quality: *the tea was all right*. ■ in a satisfactory mental or physical state: *do you feel all right to walk home?* ■ permissible; allowable: *it's all right for you to go now*.

▶ adverb 1 in a satisfactory manner or to a satisfactory extent; fairly well: *we get on all right*.

2 used to emphasize how certain one is about something: *'Are you sure it's him?' 'It's him all right.'*

▶ exclamation expressing or asking for assent, agreement, or acceptance: *all right, I'll tell you*.
– PHRASES **it's all right for**— used to suggest that someone is luckier than you: *it was all right for them! They didn't have to put up with the brat trailing after them* | *'It's all right for some,' Grandad huffed. It'll be all right on the night* used to say that a performance or event will be successful even if the preparations have not gone well: *the organizers assure everyone that it will all be all right on the night*.

all-round ▶ adjective [attrib.] Brit. 1 having a great many abilities or uses; versatile: *an all-round artist*. ■ in many or all respects: *his all-round excellence*. 2 on or from every side or in every direction: *the car's large glass area provides excellent all-round vision*.

all-rounder ▶ noun Brit. a versatile person or thing, especially a cricketer who can both bat and bowl well.

All Saints' Day ▶ noun a Christian festival in honour of all the saints in heaven, held (in the Western Church) on 1 November.

all-seater ▶ adjective Brit. (of a sports stadium) having a seat for every spectator and no standing places.

allseed ▶ noun any of a number of plants producing a large number of seeds for their size. ● Species in several families, in particular the small *Radiola linoides* (family Linaceae) of Europe.

All Souls' Day ▶ noun a Catholic commemoration with prayers for the souls of the dead, held on 2 November.

allspice ▶ noun 1 [mass noun] the dried aromatic fruit of a Caribbean tree, used whole or ground as a culinary spice and in the production of certain liqueurs such as Benedictine.

2 a tree of the myrtle family from which allspice is obtained. Also called **PIMENTO** or **JAMAICA PEPPER**. ● *Pimenta dioica*, family Myrtaceae.
● an aromatic North American tree or shrub. ● Genus *Calycanthus*, family Calycanthaceae.

all-star ▶ adjective [attrib.] composed wholly of outstanding performers or players: *an all-star cast*.
▶ noun N. Amer. a member of an all-star group or team.

Allston /'ɔ:lst(ə)n/, Washington (1779–1843), American landscape painter, the first major artist of the American romantic movement.

all-terrain vehicle ▶ noun a small open motor vehicle with one seat and three or more wheels fitted with large tyres, designed for use on rough ground.

all-ticket ▶ adjective denoting an event, especially a sports match, for which spectators must buy tickets in advance.

all-time ▶ adjective [attrib.] unsurpassed: *her all-time favourite* | *interest rates hit an all-time high*.

allude ▶ verb [no obj.] (**allude to**) suggest or call attention to indirectly; hint at: *she had a way of alluding to Jean but never saying her name*. ■ mention without discussing at length: *we will allude briefly to the main points*. ■ (of an artist or a work of art) recall (an earlier work or style) in such a way as to suggest a relationship with it.

– ORIGIN late 15th cent. (in the sense 'hint at, suggest'): from Latin *allus-*, *alludere*, from *ad-* 'towards' + *ludere* 'to play'.

all-up weight ▶ noun chiefly Brit. the total weight of an aircraft with passengers, cargo, and fuel.

allure ▶ noun [mass noun] the quality of being powerfully and mysteriously attractive or fascinating: *people for whom gold holds no allure*.

▶ verb [with obj.] powerfully attract or charm; tempt: *will sponsors really be allured by such opportunities?*

– DERIVATIVES **allurement** noun.
– ORIGIN late Middle English (in the sense 'tempt, entice'): from Old French *aleurier* 'attract', from *a-* (from Latin *ad* 'to') + *luere* 'a lure' (originally a falconry term).

alluring ▶ adjective powerfully and mysteriously attractive or fascinating; seductive: *the town offers alluring shops and restaurants*.

– DERIVATIVES **alluringly** adverb.

allus /'ɔ:lʊz, 'aləz/ ▶ adverb non-standard spelling of ALWAYS.

– ORIGIN mid 19th cent.: representing a regional pronunciation.

allusion ▶ noun an expression designed to call something to mind without mentioning it explicitly; an indirect or passing reference: *an allusion to Shakespeare* | *a classical allusion*. ■ [mass noun] the practice of making allusions.

– ORIGIN mid 16th cent. (denoting a pun, metaphor, or parable): from French, or from late Latin *allusio(n-)*, from the verb *alludere* (see ALLUDE).

allusive ▶ adjective using or containing suggestion rather than explicit mention: *allusive references to the body* | *a highly allusive poet*.

– DERIVATIVES **allusively** adverb, **allusiveness** noun.

alluvial /ə'lju:viəl/ ▶ adjective relating to or derived from alluvium: *rich alluvial soils*.

alluvion /ə'lju:viən/ ▶ noun [mass noun] chiefly Law the action of the sea or a river in adding to the area of land by deposition. Compare with **AVULSION**.

– ORIGIN mid 16th cent. (originally denoting a flood, especially one carrying suspended material which is then deposited): from French, from Latin *alluvio(n-)*, from *ad-* 'towards' + *luere* 'to wash'.

alluvium /ə'lju:viəm/ ▶ noun [mass noun] a deposit of clay, silt, and sand left by flowing floodwater in a river valley or delta, typically producing fertile soil.

– ORIGIN mid 17th cent.: Latin, neuter of *alluvius* 'washed against', from *ad-* 'towards' + *luere* 'to wash'.

all-weather ▶ adjective in or suitable for all types of weather: *an all-weather soccer pitch*.

all-wheel drive ▶ adjective North American term for **FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE**.

ally /'ali:/ ▶ noun (pl. **allies**) a state formally cooperating with another for a military or other purpose. ■ a person or organization that cooperates with or helps another in a particular activity: *he was forced to dismiss his closest political ally*. ■ (**the Allies**) the countries that fought with Britain in the First and Second World Wars.

▶ verb also /ə'lai/ (**allies**, **allying**, **allied**) [with obj.] (**ally something to/with**) combine or unite a resource or commodity with (another) for mutual benefit: *he*

A

– ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin *assimilatus* 'absorbed, incorporated', from the verb *assimilare*, from *ad-* 'to' + *similis* 'like'.

assimilationist ▶ noun a person who advocates or participates in racial or cultural integration.

Assisi¹ /ə'si:si/ a town in the region of Umbria in central Italy; pop. 27,507 (2008). It is famous as the birthplace of St Francis, whose tomb is located there.

Assisi² see CLARE OF ASSISI, ST.

Assisi³ see FRANCIS OF ASSISI, ST.

assist ▶ verb [with obj.] help (someone), typically by doing a share of the work: *a senior academic would assist him in his work* | [no obj.] *their presence would assist in keeping the peace*. ■ help by providing money or information: *they were assisting police with their inquiries* | [no obj.] *funds to assist with capital investment*. ■ [no obj.] be present as a helper: *two midwives who assisted at a water birth*.

▶ noun chiefly N. Amer. an act of giving help, typically by providing money: *the budget must have an assist from tax policies*. ■ (in sport) an act of touching the ball in a play in which a teammate scores or an opposing batter is put out: *Elliot had 10 points and five assists*.

– DERIVATIVES **assister** noun, **assistive** adjective.

– ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *assister*, from Latin *assistere* 'take one's stand by', from *ad-* 'to, at' + *sistere* 'take one's stand'.

assistance ▶ noun [mass noun] the action of helping someone by sharing work: *the work was completed with the assistance of carpenters*. ■ the provision of money, resources, or information to help someone: *schemes offering financial assistance to employers* | *she will be glad to give advice and assistance*.

– PHRASES **be of assistance** be of practical use or help: *the guide will be of assistance to development groups*. **come to someone's assistance** act to help someone.

– ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French, or from medieval Latin *assistentia*, from Latin *assistere* (see **ASSIST**).

assistant ▶ noun a person who ranks below a senior person: *the managing director and his assistant* | [as modifier] *an assistant manager*. ■ [with adj. or noun modifier] a person who helps in particular work: *a care assistant*.

– ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French, or from medieval Latin *assistent-* 'taking one's stand beside', from the verb *assistere* (see **ASSIST**).

assistant professor ▶ noun N. Amer. a university teacher ranking immediately below an associate professor.

assistantship ▶ noun N. Amer. a paid academic appointment made to a graduate student that involves part-time teaching or research.

assisted area ▶ noun (in the UK) a region receiving government grants or loans for industrial development.

assisted place ▶ noun (in the UK) a place in an independent school for a pupil whose fees are wholly or partially subsidized by the state.

assisted suicide ▶ noun [mass noun] the suicide of a patient suffering from an incurable disease, effected by the taking of lethal drugs provided by a doctor for this purpose.

assize /ə'saɪz/ ▶ noun (usu. **assizes**) historical a court which formerly sat at intervals in each county of England and Wales to administer the civil and criminal law. In 1972 the civil jurisdiction of assizes was transferred to the High Court, and the criminal jurisdiction to the Crown Court.

– ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French *assise*, feminine past participle of *asseoir* 'sit, settle, assess', from Latin *assidere* (see **ASSESS**).

ass-kicking ▶ adjective N. Amer. vulgar slang forceful or aggressive.

ass-kissing ▶ noun [mass noun] N. Amer. vulgar slang obsequious behaviour in order to gain favour.

ass-licking ▶ noun vulgar slang US spelling of **ARSE-LICKING**.

assload ▶ noun N. Amer. vulgar slang a large number or amount of something.

Assoc. ▶ abbreviation (as part of a title) Association.

associate ▶ verb /ə'səʊʃi:ət, -sɪət/ [with obj.] (often **associate someone/thing with**) connect (someone or something) with something else in one's mind: *I associated wealth with freedom*. ■ connect (something) with something else because they occur together or one produces the other: *the environmental problems associated with nuclear waste*. ■ (**be**

associated with) be involved with. ■ (**associate oneself with**) allow oneself to be connected with or seen to be supportive of: *I cannot associate myself with some of the language used*. ■ [no obj.] meet or have dealings with someone regarded with disapproval: *he began to associate with the Mafia*.

▶ noun /ə'səʊʃi:ət, -sɪət/ **1** a partner or companion in business or at work: *a close associate of the Minister*. **2** a person with limited or subordinate membership of an organization. **3** chiefly Psychology a concept connected with another.

▶ adjective /ə'səʊʃi:ət, -sɪət/ [attrib.] connected with an organization or business: *an associate company*. ■ having shared function or membership but with a lesser status: *the associate director of the academy*.

– DERIVATIVES **associability** noun, **associable** adjective, **associateship** noun, **associator** noun.

– ORIGIN late Middle English (as a verb in the sense 'join with in a common purpose'; as an adjective in the sense 'allied'); from Latin *associat-* 'joined', from the verb *associare*, from *ad-* 'to' + *socius* 'sharing, allied'.

associated ▶ adjective (of a person or thing) connected with something else: *two associated events*. ■ (of a company) connected or amalgamated with another company or companies. ■ Chemistry (of liquids) in which the molecules are held together by hydrogen bonding or other weak interaction.

Associated Press (abbrev.: **AP**) an international news agency based in New York City.

associate professor ▶ noun N. Amer. an academic ranking immediately below full professor.

association ▶ noun **1** (often in names) a group of people organized for a joint purpose: *the National Association of Probation Officers*. ■ Ecology a stable plant community including a characteristic group of dominant plant species. **2** a connection or cooperative link between people or organizations: *he developed a close association with the university* | [mass noun] *the programme was promoted in association with the Department of Music*. ■ [mass noun] the process or state of becoming a subordinate member of an organization: [as modifier] *an association agreement between Bulgaria and the EU*. ■ Chemistry the linking of molecules through hydrogen bonding or other interaction short of full bond formation. **3** (usu. **associations**) a mental connection between things: *the word bureaucracy has unpleasant associations*. ■ [mass noun] the action of making a mental connection: *there's nothing new in the association of fasting with spirituality*. **4** [mass noun] the state of occurring with something else; co-occurrence: *cases of cancer found in association with colitis*.

– DERIVATIVES **associational** adjective.

– ORIGIN mid 16th cent. (in the sense 'uniting in a common purpose'): from medieval Latin *associatio* (n-), from Latin *associare* 'to unite, ally' (see **ASSOCIATE**).

association area ▶ noun Anatomy a region of the cortex of the brain which connects sensory and motor areas, and which is thought to be concerned with higher mental activities.

Association football ▶ noun [mass noun] Brit. more formal term for soccer.

associationism ▶ noun [mass noun] a theory in philosophy or psychology which regards the simple association or co-occurrence of ideas or sensations as the primary basis of meaning, thought, or learning.

– DERIVATIVES **associationist** noun & adjective.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (abbrev.: **ASEAN**) a regional organization intended to promote economic cooperation and now comprising the countries of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and Brunei.

associative ▶ adjective **1** of or involving the association of things: *making associative links*. ■ Computing of or denoting computer storage in which items are identified by content rather than by address. **2** Mathematics involving the condition that a group of quantities connected by operators gives the same result whatever their grouping, i.e. in whichever order the operations are performed, as long as the order of the quantities remains the same, e.g. $(a \times b) \times c = a \times (b \times c)$.

assonance /'as(ə)ns(ə)ns/ ▶ noun [mass noun] resemblance of sound between syllables of nearby words, arising particularly from the rhyming of two or more stressed vowels, but not consonants (e.g. *sonnet, por-*

ridge), but also from the use of identical consonants with different vowels (e.g. *killed, cold, culled*).

– DERIVATIVES **assonant** adjective.

– ORIGIN early 18th cent.: from French, from Latin *assonare* 'respond to', from *ad-* 'to' + *sonare* (from *sonus* 'sound').

assort ▶ verb **1** [no obj.] Genetics (of genes or characteristics) become distributed among cells or progeny. **2** [with obj.] archaic place in a group; classify: *he would assort it with the fabulous dogs as a monstrous invention*.

– ORIGIN late 15th cent.: from Old French *assorter*, from *a-* (from Latin *ad* 'to, at') + *sorte* 'sort, kind'.

assortative ▶ adjective denoting or involving the preferential mating of animals or marriage between people with similar characteristics.

assorted ▶ adjective [attrib.] of various sorts put together; miscellaneous: *bowls in assorted colours*.

assortment ▶ noun a miscellaneous collection of things or people: *the room was filled with an assortment of clothes*.

ASSR ▶ abbreviation historical Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

Asst ▶ abbreviation Assistant.

assuage /ə'sweɪdʒ/ ▶ verb [with obj.] make (an unpleasant feeling) less intense: *the letter assuaged the fears of most members*. ■ satisfy (an appetite or desire): *an opportunity occurred to assuage her desire for knowledge*.

– DERIVATIVES **assuagement** noun.

– ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French *assouagier*, *assouagier*, based on Latin *ad-* 'to' (expressing change) + *suaavis* 'sweet'.

As Sulaymaniyah /as/ full name of **SULAYMANIYAH**.

assume ▶ verb [with obj.] **1** suppose to be the case, without proof: *topics which assume detailed knowledge of local events* | [with clause] *it is reasonable to assume that such changes have significant social effects* | [with obj. and infinitive] *they were assumed to be foreign*. **2** take or begin to have (power or responsibility): *he assumed full responsibility for all organizational work*. ■ seize (power or control). **3** begin to have (a specified quality, appearance, or extent): *militant activity had assumed epidemic proportions*. ■ take on or adopt (a manner or identity), sometimes falsely: *Oliver assumed an expression of penitence* | (as adj. **assumed**) *a man living under an assumed name*.

– DERIVATIVES **assumable** adjective, **assumedly** adverb.

– ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin *assumere*, from *ad-* 'towards' + *sumere* 'take'.

assuming ▶ conjunction used for the purpose of argument to indicate a premise on which a statement can be based: *assuming that the treaty is ratified, what is its relevance?*

▶ adjective archaic arrogant or presumptuous.

assumption ▶ noun **1** a thing that is accepted as true or as certain to happen, without proof: *they made certain assumptions about the market* | [with clause] *we're working on the assumption that the time of death was after midnight*. **2** [mass noun] the action of taking on power or responsibility. **3** (**Assumption**) the reception of the Virgin Mary bodily into heaven. This was formally declared a doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church in 1950. ■ the feast in honour of the Assumption, celebrated on 15 August. **4** [mass noun] archaic arrogance or presumption.

– ORIGIN Middle English (in sense 3): from Old French *assomption* or Latin *assumptio* (n-), from the verb *assumere* (see **ASSUME**).

assumptive ▶ adjective **1** rare of the nature of an assumption. **2** archaic arrogant or presumptuous.

– ORIGIN mid 16th cent. (in the sense 'taken, adopted'): from Latin *assumptivus*, from the verb *assumere* (see **ASSUME**).

Assur /'aʃʊə/ (also **Asur** or **Ashur**) an ancient city-state of Mesopotamia, situated on the River Tigris to the south of modern Mosul. It was the traditional capital of the Assyrian empires.

assurance ▶ noun **1** a positive declaration intended to give confidence; a promise: [with clause] *he gave an assurance that work would begin on Monday*. **2** [mass noun] confidence or certainty in one's own abilities: *she drove with assurance*. ■ certainty about something: *assurance of faith depends on our trust in God*.

A

autocephalous /ˌɔ:tə(ʊ)sef(ə)ləs, -'kef-/ ► adjective (of an Eastern Christian Church) appointing its own head, not subject to the authority of an external patriarch or archbishop.

– ORIGIN mid 19th cent.: from Greek *autokephalos* (from *autos* 'self' + *kephalē* 'head') + -ous.

autochanger (also **autochange**) ► noun a mechanism for the automatic substitution of one CD or record for another during use.

autochrome ► noun [mass noun] (usu. as modifier) an early form of colour photography using plates coated with dyed starch grains, patented by the Lumière brothers in 1904. ■ [count noun] a colour photograph made by this process.

autochthon /ɔ:'tɒkθ(ə)n, -θəʊn/ ► noun (pl. **autochthons** or **autochthones** /-θə'nɪz/) an original or indigenous inhabitant of a place; an aborigine.

– ORIGIN late 16th cent.: from Greek, literally 'sprung from the earth', from *autos* 'self' + *kthōn* 'earth, soil'.

autochthonous /ɔ:'tɒkθənəs/ ► adjective (of an inhabitant of a place) indigenous rather than descended from migrants or colonists. ■ Geology (of a deposit or formation) formed in its present position. Often contrasted with **ALLOCHTHONOUS**.

autoclave /'ɔ:tə(ʊ)kleɪv/ ► noun a strong heated container used for chemical reactions and other processes using high pressures and temperatures, e.g. steam sterilization.

► verb [with obj.] heat (something) in an autoclave.

– ORIGIN late 19th cent.: from French, from *auto-* 'self' + Latin *clavis* 'nail' or *clavis* 'key' (so named because it is self-fastening).

autocomplete ► noun Computing a software function that completes words or strings without the user needing to type them in full.

autocorrelation ► noun [mass noun] Mathematics & Statistics correlation between the elements of a series and others from the same series separated from them by a given interval. ■ [count noun] a calculation of such correlation.

autocracy /ɔ:'tɒkrəsi/ ► noun (pl. **autocracies**) [mass noun] a system of government by one person with absolute power. ■ [count noun] a state or society governed by one person with absolute power. ■ domineering rule or control: *a boss who shifts between autocracy and consultation*.

– ORIGIN mid 17th cent. (in the sense 'autonomy'): from Greek *autokratēia*, from *autokratēs* (see **AUTOCRAT**).

autocrat ► noun a ruler who has absolute power. ■ an imperious person who insists on complete obedience from others.

– ORIGIN early 19th cent.: from French *autocrate*, from Greek *autokratēs*, from *autos* 'self' + *kratos* 'power'.

autocratic ► adjective relating to a ruler who has absolute power: *the constitutional reforms threatened his autocratic power*. ■ taking no account of other people's wishes or opinions; domineering: *a man with a reputation for an autocratic management style*.

– DERIVATIVES **autocratically** adverb.

autocrine /'ɔ:tə(ʊ)kraɪn/ ► adjective Biochemistry denoting or relating to a cell-produced substance that has an effect on the cell by which it is secreted.

– ORIGIN 1980s: from **AUTO-** + Greek *krinein* 'to separate'.

autocross ► noun [mass noun] Brit. a form of motor racing in which cars are driven singly or in heats over a course including rough terrain or unmade roads. Compare with **RALLYCROSS**. ■ N. Amer. a form of competition in which cars are driven around an obstacle course, typically marked out by cones on an empty car park.

– ORIGIN 1960s: blend of **AUTOMOBILE** and **CROSS-COUNTRY**.

autocue ► noun trademark, Brit. a device which projects an enlarged image of a script on to a clear glass screen in front of a person speaking on television or in public, so enabling the speaker to read their speech while appearing to be looking at the viewers or audience.

auto-da-fé /ɔ:'tɔ:əʊdɑ:'feɪ/ ► noun (pl. **autos-da-fé** /ɔ:'tɔ:əʊz-/) the burning of a heretic by the Spanish Inquisition. ■ a sentence of such a kind.

– ORIGIN early 18th cent.: from Portuguese, literally 'act of the faith'.

autodial ► verb (**autodials**, **autodialling**, **autodialled**; US **autodials**, **autodialing**, **autodialed**) [no obj.]

Computing (of a modem) automatically dial a telephone number or establish a connection with a computer.

– DERIVATIVES **autodialler** noun.

autodidact /'ɔ:tə'dɪdɪkt/ ► noun a self-taught person.

– DERIVATIVES **autodidactic** adjective.

– ORIGIN mid 18th cent.: from Greek *autodidaktos* 'self-taught', from *autos* 'self' + *didaskēin* 'teach'.

auto-erotic ► adjective relating to sexual excitement generated by stimulating or fantasizing about one's own body.

– DERIVATIVES **auto-eroticism** noun.

auto-exposure ► noun a device which sets the exposure automatically on a camera. ■ [mass noun] the facility to set exposure automatically.

autofill ► noun Computing a software function that completes data in browser forms without the user needing to type it in full.

autofocus ► noun a device focusing a camera or other piece of equipment automatically. ■ [mass noun] the facility for automatic focusing.

– DERIVATIVES **autofocusing** noun.

autogamy /ɔ:'tɒgəmi/ ► noun Biology self-fertilization, especially the self pollination of a flower. Compare with **ALLOGAMY**.

– DERIVATIVES **autogamous** adjective.

– ORIGIN late 19th cent.: from **AUTO-** 'self' + Greek *-gamia* (from *gamos* 'marriage').

autogenic /'ɔ:tə(ʊ)'dʒenɪk/ ► adjective technical self-generated: *autogenic succession*.

autogenic training ► noun [mass noun] a form of relaxation therapy involving auto-suggestion.

autogenous /ɔ:'tɒdʒɪnəs/ ► adjective arising from within or from a thing itself. ■ (of welding) done either without a filler or with a filler of the same metal as the pieces being welded.

autogiro (also **autogyro**) ► noun (pl. **autogiros**) a form of aircraft with freely rotating horizontal blades and a propeller. It differs from a helicopter in that the blades are not powered but rotate in the slipstream, propulsion being by a conventional mounted engine.

– ORIGIN 1920s: from Spanish, from *auto-* 'self' + *giro* 'gyration'.

autograft ► noun a graft of tissue from one point to another of the same individual's body.

autograph ► noun 1 a signature, especially that of a celebrity written as a memento for an admirer: *fans surged around the car asking for autographs*.

2 a manuscript or musical score in an author's or musician's own handwriting. ■ [mass noun] a person's handwriting.

► verb [with obj.] write one's signature on (something); sign: *the whole team autographed a shirt for him* | (as adj. **autographed**) *an autographed photo*.

► adjective written in the author's own handwriting: *an autograph manuscript*. ■ (Of a painting or sculpture) done by the artist, not by a copier.

– DERIVATIVES **autographic** adjective.

– ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from French *autographe* or late Latin *autographum*, from Greek *autographōn*, neuter of *autographos* 'written with one's own hand', from *autos* 'self' + *graphos* 'written'.

autography ► noun [mass noun] 1 writing done with one's own hand.

2 the facsimile reproduction of writing or illustration.

3 [count noun] an autobiography.

autoharp ► noun a kind of zither fitted with a series of sprung and padded bars which allow the playing of chords by damping selected strings.

autohypnosis ► noun [mass noun] induction of a hypnotic state in oneself; self-hypnosis.

– DERIVATIVES **autohypnotic** adjective.

autoimmune ► adjective Medicine relating to disease caused by antibodies or lymphocytes produced against substances naturally present in the body: *the infection triggers an autoimmune response*.

– DERIVATIVES **autoimmunity** noun.

autointoxication ► noun [mass noun] Medicine poisoning by a toxin formed within the body itself.

autologous /ɔ:'tɒləgəs/ ► adjective (of cells or tissues) obtained from the same individual.

autolysis /ɔ:'tɒlɪsɪs/ ► noun [mass noun] Biology the destruction of cells or tissues by their own enzymes, especially those released by lysosomes.

– DERIVATIVES **autolytic** adjective.

automagically /ɔ:'tə'mædʒɪkli/ ► adverb informal (especially in relation to the operation of a computer

process) automatically and in a way that seems ingenious, inexplicable, or magical: *just type in the name of what you want to listen to, and it automagically appears on your computer*.

– ORIGIN 1940s: blend of **AUTOMATICALLY** and **MAGICALLY**.

automaker ► noun N. Amer. a company which manufactures cars.

automat ► noun US historical a cafeteria in which food and drink were obtained from slot machines.

– ORIGIN late 17th cent. (denoting an automaton): from German, from French *automate*, from Latin *automaton* (see **AUTOMATON**). The current sense dates from the early 20th cent.

automate ► verb [with obj.] convert (a process or facility) to be operated by largely automatic equipment: *industry is investing in automating production* | (as adj. **automated**) *a fully automated process*.

– ORIGIN 1950s: back-formation from **AUTOMATION**.

automated teller machine ► noun a machine that automatically provides cash and performs other banking services on insertion of a special card by the account holder.

automatic ► adjective 1 (Of a device or process) working by itself with little or no direct human control: *an automatic kettle that switches itself off when it boils* | *calibration is fully automatic*. ■ (of a firearm) self-loading and able to fire continuously until the ammunition is exhausted or the pressure on the trigger is released. ■ (Of a motor vehicle or its transmission) using gears that change by themselves according to speed and acceleration.

2 done or occurring spontaneously, without conscious thought or attention: *automatic physical functions such as breathing* | *'Nice to meet you,' he said, with automatic politeness*. ■ done or occurring as a matter of course and without debate: *he is the automatic choice for the senior team*. ■ (especially of a legal sanction) given or imposed as a necessary and inevitable result of a fixed rule or particular set of circumstances: *he received an automatic one-match suspension*.

► noun 1 a gun that continues firing until the ammunition is exhausted or the pressure on the trigger is released.

2 a vehicle with automatic transmission.

– DERIVATIVES **automatically** adverb, **automaticity** noun.

– ORIGIN mid 18th cent.: from Greek *automatos* 'acting of itself' (see **AUTOMATON**) + -IC.

automatic gain control ► noun [mass noun] Electronics a feature of certain amplifier circuits which gives a constant output over a wide range of input levels.

automatic pilot ► noun a device for keeping an aircraft on a set course without the intervention of the pilot.

– PHRASES **on automatic pilot** out of routine or habit, without concentration or conscious thought: *I leapt out of bed and dressed on automatic pilot*.

automatic translation ► noun another term for **MACHINE TRANSLATION**.

automatic writing ► noun [mass noun] writing said to be produced by a spiritual, occult, or subconscious agency rather than by the conscious intention of the writer.

automation ► noun [mass noun] the use or introduction of automatic equipment in a manufacturing or other process or facility.

– ORIGIN 1940s (originally US): irregular formation from **AUTOMATIC** + -ATION.

automatism /ɔ:'tɒmətɪz(ə)m/ ► noun [mass noun]

Psychiatry the performance of actions without conscious thought or intention. ■ [count noun] an action performed unconsciously or involuntarily. ■ Art the avoidance of conscious intention in producing works of art, especially by using mechanical techniques or subconscious associations.

– ORIGIN mid 19th cent.: from French *automatisme*, from *automate* 'automaton', from Greek *automatos* 'acting of itself' (see **AUTOMATON**).

automatize /ɔ:'tɒmətaɪz/ (also **automatise**) ► verb [with obj.] (usu. as adj. **automatized**) make automatic or habitual: *the need to refresh automatized forms of literature*.

– DERIVATIVES **automatization** noun.

automaton /ɔ:'tɒmət(ə)n/ ► noun (pl. **automata** /-tə/ or **automatons**) a moving mechanical device made in imitation of a human being. ■ a machine which performs a range of functions according to a predetermined set of coded instructions.

– ORIGIN early 17th cent.: via Latin from Greek, neuter of *automatos* 'acting of itself', from *autos* 'self'.

detergent ▶ noun a water-soluble cleansing agent which combines with impurities and dirt to make them more soluble, and differs from soap in not forming a scum with the salts in hard water. ▶ any additive with a similar action to a detergent, e.g. an oil-soluble substance which holds dirt in suspension in lubricating oil.

▶ adjective relating to detergents or their action.
 – DERIVATIVES **detergence** noun, **detergency** noun.
 – ORIGIN early 17th cent. (as an adjective): from Latin *detergent-* 'wiping away', from the verb *detergere*, from *de-* 'away from' + *tergere* 'to wipe'.

D deteriorate /di'tɪərɪəreɪt/ ▶ verb [no obj.] become progressively worse: *relations between the countries had deteriorated sharply* | (as adj. **deteriorating**) *deteriorating economic conditions*.

– DERIVATIVES **deteriorative** adjective.
 – ORIGIN late 16th cent. (in the sense 'make worse'): from late Latin *deteriorat-* 'worsened', from the verb *deteriorare*, from Latin *deterior* 'worse'.

deterioration ▶ noun [mass noun] the process of becoming progressively worse: *a deterioration in the condition of the patient*.

determinable ▶ adjective 1 able to be definitely decided or ascertained: *a readily determinable market value*.
 2 Law capable of being brought to an end under given conditions.

– ORIGIN late Middle English: via Old French from late Latin *determinabilis* 'finite', from the verb *determinare* (see **DETERMINE**).

determinant /drɪ'tɜːmɪnənt/ ▶ noun 1 a factor which decisively affects the nature or outcome of something: *pure force of will was the main determinant of his success*. ■ Biology a gene or other factor which determines the character and development of a cell or cells in an organism, a set of which forms an individual's idiosyncrasy.
 2 Mathematics a quantity obtained by the addition of products of the elements of a square matrix according to a given rule.

▶ adjective serving to determine or decide something.
 – ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from Latin *determinant-* 'determining', from the verb *determinare* (see **DETERMINE**).

determinate /drɪ'tɜːmɪnət/ ▶ adjective having exact and discernible limits or form: *the longest determinate prison sentence ever upheld by English courts*. ■ Botany (of a flowering shoot) having the main axis ending in a flower bud and therefore no longer extending in length, as in a cyme.

– DERIVATIVES **determinacy** noun, **determinately** adverb, **determinateness** noun.
 – ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin *determinatus* 'limited, determined', past participle of *determinare* (see **DETERMINE**).

determination ▶ noun [mass noun] 1 the quality of being determined; firmness of purpose: *those who succeed because of sheer grit and determination*.
 2 the process of establishing something exactly by calculation or research: *determination of molecular structures*. ■ Law the settlement of a dispute by the authoritative decision of a judge or arbitrator. ■ [count noun] Law a judicial decision or sentence.

3 the controlling or deciding of the nature or outcome of something: *genetic sex determination*.
 4 Law the cessation of an estate or interest.
 5 archaic a tendency to move in a fixed direction.
 – ORIGIN late Middle English (in the senses 'settlement of a controversy by a judge or by reasoning' and 'authoritative opinion'): via Old French from Latin *determinatio*(n-), from the verb *determinare* (see **DETERMINE**).

determinative /drɪ'tɜːmɪnətɪv/ ▶ adjective [predic.] chiefly Law serving to define, qualify, or direct: *the employer's view is not determinative of the issue*.
 ▶ noun Grammar another term for **DETERMINER**.

determine /drɪ'tɜːmɪn/ ▶ verb [with obj.] 1 cause (something) to occur in a particular way or to have a particular nature: *it will be her mental attitude that determines her future*.
 2 ascertain or establish exactly by research or calculation: *the inquest is entrusted with the task of determining the cause of death* | [with clause] *the point of our study was to determine what is true, not what is practicable*. ■ Mathematics specify the value, position, or form of (a mathematical or geometrical object) uniquely.

3 [no obj.] firmly decide: *he determined on a withdrawal of his forces* | [with infinitive] *she determined to tackle Stephen the next day*.
 4 Law, archaic bring or come to an end.

– ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *determiner*, from Latin *determinare* 'limit, fix', from *de-* 'completely' + *terminare* 'terminate'.

determined ▶ adjective having made a firm decision and being resolved not to change it: [with infinitive] *Alina was determined to be heard*. ■ possessing or displaying resolve: *Helen was a determined little girl* | *a determined effort to reduce inflation*.

– DERIVATIVES **determinedly** adverb, **determinedness** noun.

determiner ▶ noun 1 a person or thing that determines or decides something.
 2 Grammar a modifying word that determines the kind of reference a noun or noun group has, for example *a, the, every*. See also **ARTICLE**.

determining ▶ adjective causing something to occur or be done in a particular way; serving to decide something: *money may have been the determining factor in his decision*.

determinism ▶ noun [mass noun] Philosophy the doctrine that all events, including human action, are ultimately determined by causes regarded as external to the will. Some philosophers have taken determinism to imply that individual human beings have no free will and cannot be held morally responsible for their actions.

– DERIVATIVES **determinist** noun & adjective, **deterministic** adjective, **deterministically** adverb.

deterrent /drɪ'tɜː(ə)nt/ ▶ noun a thing that discourages or is intended to discourage someone from doing something: *cameras are a major deterrent to crime*. ■ a nuclear weapon or weapons system regarded as deterring an enemy from attack.

▶ adjective able or intended to deter: *the deterrent effect of heavy prison sentences*.

– DERIVATIVES **deterrence** noun.
 – ORIGIN early 19th cent.: from Latin *deterrent-* 'detering', from the verb *deterere* (see **DETER**).

detest ▶ verb [with obj.] dislike intensely: *she really did detest his mockery*.

– DERIVATIVES **detester** noun.
 – ORIGIN late 15th cent.: from Latin *detestari*, from *de-* 'down' + *testari* 'witness, call upon to witness' (from *testis* 'a witness').

detestable ▶ adjective deserving intense dislike: *I found the film's violence detestable*.

– DERIVATIVES **detestably** adverb.
 – ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French, or from Latin *detestabilis*, from the verb *detestari* (see **DETEST**).

detestation /dɪ'teːstɪʃ(ə)n/ ▶ noun [mass noun] intense dislike: *Wordsworth's detestation of aristocracy*.

■ [count noun] archaic a detested person or thing: *he is the detestation of the neighbourhood*.
 – ORIGIN late Middle English: via Old French from Latin *detestatio*(n-), from the verb *detestari* (see **DETEST**).

dethrone ▶ verb [with obj.] remove (a monarch) from power. ■ remove from a position of authority or dominance: *he dethroned the defending title-holder*.

– DERIVATIVES **dethronement** noun.

detinue /'detɪnjuː/ ▶ noun [mass noun] Law the crime of wrongful detention of goods or personal possessions (replaced in the UK by the tort of wrongful interference of goods).

– ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *detenue*, past participle (used as a noun) of *detenir* 'detain'.

detonate /'detəneɪt/ ▶ verb explode or cause to explode: [no obj.] *two other bombs failed to detonate* | [with obj.] *a trigger that can detonate nuclear weapons*.

– DERIVATIVES **detonative** adjective.
 – ORIGIN early 18th cent.: from Latin *detonat-* 'thundered down or forth', from the verb *detonare*, from *de-* 'down' + *tonare* 'to thunder'.

detonation ▶ noun [mass noun] the action of causing a bomb or explosive device to explode. ■ [count noun] a loud explosion: *a series of deafening detonations was heard*. ■ technical combustion of a substance which is initiated suddenly and propagates extremely rapidly, giving rise to a shock wave. Compare with **DEFLAGRATION**. ■ the premature combustion of fuel in an internal-combustion engine, causing pinking.
 – ORIGIN late 17th cent.: from French *détonation*, from the verb *détoner*, from Latin *detonare* 'thunder down' (see **DETONATE**).

detonator ▶ noun a device or small sensitive charge used to detonate an explosive. ■ Brit. another term for **FOG SIGNAL**.

detorsion /drɪ'tɔːʃ(ə)n/ ▶ noun [mass noun] Zoology (in gastropod molluscs) the evolutionary reversion of a group to a primitive linear body plan. Compare with **TORSION**.

detour ▶ noun a long or roundabout route that is taken to avoid something or to visit somewhere along the way: *he had made a detour to a cafe*. ■ an alternative route for use by traffic when the usual road is temporarily closed.

▶ verb [no obj., with adverbial of direction] chiefly N. Amer. take a long or roundabout route: *he detoured around the walls*. ■ [with obj.] avoid by taking a detour: *I would detour the endless stream of motor homes*.

– ORIGIN mid 18th cent. (as a noun): from French *détour* 'change of direction', from *détourner* 'turn away'.

detox informal ▶ noun /'di:tɒks/ [mass noun] detoxification: *he ended up in detox for three months*.

▶ verb /'di:tɒks/ detoxify.

detoxicate /drɪ'tɒksɪkeɪt/ ▶ verb another term for **DETOXIFY**.

– DERIVATIVES **detoxication** noun.
 – ORIGIN mid 19th cent.: from **DE-** (expressing removal) + Latin *toxicum* 'poison', on the pattern of *intoxicare*.

detoxification ▶ noun [mass noun] the process of removing toxic substances. ■ medical treatment of an alcoholic or drug addict involving abstinence from drink or drugs until the bloodstream is free of toxins.

detoxify /drɪ'tɒksɪfaɪ/ ▶ verb (**detoxifies**, **detoxify**, **detoxified**) [with obj.] remove toxic substances from: *the process uses chemical reagents to detoxify the oil*. ■ abstain or help to abstain from drink and drugs until the bloodstream is free of toxins, in order to overcome alcoholism or drug addiction. ■ [no obj.] become free of harmful substances: *you can help your body detoxify by cutting down on coffee*.

– DERIVATIVES **detoxifier** noun.
 – ORIGIN early 20th cent.: from **DE-** (expressing removal) + Latin *toxicum* 'poison' + **-FY**.

detract ▶ verb [no obj.] (**detract from**) diminish the worth or value of (a quality or achievement): *these quibbles in no way detract from her achievement*. ■ [with obj.] take away (a specified amount) from the worth or value of a quality or achievement.

– DERIVATIVES **detract** noun, **detractive** adjective.
 – ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin *detract-* 'drawn away', from the verb *detrāhere*, from *de-* 'away from' + *trāhere* 'draw'.

detractor ▶ noun a person who disparages someone or something.

detrain ▶ verb leave or cause to leave a train.
 – DERIVATIVES **detrainment** noun.

detritalize (also **detrilize**) ▶ verb [with obj.] (usu. as adj. **detrIALIZED**) remove (someone) from a traditional tribal social structure.
 – DERIVATIVES **detrilization** noun.

detriment /'dɛtrɪmənt/ ▶ noun [mass noun] the state of being harmed or damaged: *he is engrossed in his work to the detriment of his married life* | *light industry can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenities*. ■ [count noun] a cause of harm or damage: *such tests are a detriment to good education*.

– ORIGIN late Middle English in the sense 'loss sustained by damage': from Old French, from Latin *detrimentum*, from *detrī-*, stem of *deterere* 'wear away'.

detrimental ▶ adjective tending to cause harm: *recent policies have been detrimental to the interests of many old people* | *moving her could have a detrimental effect on her health*.
 – DERIVATIVES **detrimentally** adverb.

detrition /drɪ'trɪʃ(ə)n/ ▶ noun [mass noun] rare the action of wearing something away by friction.
 – ORIGIN late 17th cent.: from medieval Latin *detritio*(n-), from *detrī-*, stem of *deterere* 'wear away'.

detrivore /drɪ'trɪvɔː/ ▶ noun Zoology an animal which feeds on dead organic material, especially plant detritus.
 – DERIVATIVES **detrivorous** /drɪ'trɪv(ə)rəs/ adjective.

– ORIGIN 1960s: from **DETRITUS** + *-vore* 'eating' (see **-VOROUS**).

detritus /drɪ'trɪtəs/ ▶ noun [mass noun] waste or debris of any kind: *the streets were foul with detritus*. ■ gravel, sand, silt, or other material produced by erosion. ■ organic matter produced by the decomposition of organisms.
 – DERIVATIVES **detrital** adjective.

- 2** [mass noun] the use of affectation to impress; pretentiousness: *he spoke simply, without pretension.*
 – ORIGIN late Middle English: from medieval Latin *praetensio* (n-), from *praetens*- 'alleged', from the verb *praetendere* (see **PRETEND**).
- pre-tension** ▶ verb [with obj.] apply tension to (an object) before manufacture or use. ■ strengthen (reinforced concrete) by applying tension to the reinforcing rods before the concrete has set.
 – DERIVATIVES **pre-tensioner** noun.
- pretentious** ▶ adjective attempting to impress by affecting greater importance or merit than is actually possessed: *pretentious art films | the pretentious jargon of wine experts.*
 – DERIVATIVES **pretentiously** adverb, **pretentiousness** noun.
 – ORIGIN mid 19th cent.: from French *prétentieux*, from *prétention* (see **PRETENSION**).
- pre-** /'pri:tə/ ▶ combining form more than: *pre-natural.*
 – ORIGIN from Latin *praeter* 'past, beyond'.
- preterite** /'pret(ə)rit/ (US also **preterit**) Grammar
 ▶ adjective expressing a past action or state.
 ▶ noun a simple past tense or form.
 – ORIGIN Middle English (in the sense 'bygone, former'): from Latin *praeteritus* 'gone by', past participle of *praeterire*, from *praeter* 'past, beyond' + *ire* 'go'.
- preterition** /,pri:tə'riʃ(ə)n/ ▶ noun [mass noun] the action of passing over or disregarding a matter, especially the rhetorical technique of making summary mention of something by professing to omit it.
 – ORIGIN late 16th cent.: from late Latin *praeteritio* (n-), from *praeterire* 'pass, go by'.
- preterm** Medicine ▶ adjective born or occurring after a pregnancy significantly shorter than normal, especially after no more than 37 weeks of pregnancy.
 ▶ adverb after a short pregnancy; prematurely: *babies born preterm are likely to lack surfactant in the lungs.*
- pretermitt** /,pri:tə'mit/ ▶ verb (**pretermits, pretermitted, pretermitted**) [with obj.] archaic 1 omit to do or mention: *some points of conduct we advisedly pretermitted.*
 2 abandon (a custom or continuous action) for a time: *the pleasant musical evenings were now entirely pretermitted.*
 – DERIVATIVES **pretermismission** /-'mɪʃ(ə)n/ noun.
 – ORIGIN late 15th cent.: from Latin *praetermittere*, from *praeter* 'past, beyond' + *mittere* 'let go'.
- preternatural** /,pri:tə'natʃ(ə)r(ə)l/ (also **praeternatural**) ▶ adjective beyond what is normal or natural: *autumn had arrived with preternatural speed.*
 – DERIVATIVES **preternaturally** adverb.
- pretest** ▶ noun a preliminary test or trial.
 ▶ verb [with obj.] carry out a preliminary test or trial of: *prior to its use, the questionnaire was pretested on two groups of trainees.*
- pretext** ▶ noun a reason given in justification of a course of action that is not the real reason: *the rebels had the perfect pretext for making their move | he called round on the pretext of asking after her mother.*
 – ORIGIN early 16th cent.: from Latin *praetextus* 'outward display', from the verb *praetextere* 'to disguise', from *prae* 'before' + *texere* 'weave'.
- pretor** ▶ noun US spelling of **PRÆTOR**.
- Pretoria** /prɪ'tɔ:riə/ the administrative capital of South Africa; pop. 1,679,200 (est. 2009). It was founded in 1855 by Marthinus Wessel Pretorius (1819–1901), the first President of the South African Republic, and named after his father Andries.
- pretorian** ▶ adjective & noun US spelling of **PRÆTORIAN**.
- Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging** /fə'ri:mɪkɪŋ/ former name (until 1995) for **GAUTENG**.
- pretreat** ▶ verb [with obj.] treat (something) with a chemical before use.
 – DERIVATIVES **pretreatment** noun.
- pretrial** ▶ adjective in or relating to the period before a judicial trial: *a pretrial hearing.*
- prettify** ▶ verb (**prettifies, prettifying, prettified**) [with obj.] make (someone or something) appear superficially pretty or attractive: *nothing has been done to prettify the site.*
 – DERIVATIVES **prettification** noun, **prettifier** noun.
- pretty** ▶ adjective (**prettier, prettiest**) 1 (of a person, especially a woman or child) attractive in a delicate way without being truly beautiful: *a pretty little girl with an engaging grin.* ■ (of a thing) pleasing to the eye or the ear: *a pretty summer dress.*
 2 [attrib.] informal used ironically to express annoyance or displeasure: *he led me a pretty dance.*
 ▶ adverb [as submodifier] informal to a moderately high degree; fairly: *he looked pretty fit for his age.*
 ▶ noun (pl. **pretties**) informal an attractive thing, especially a trinket: *he buys her lots of pretties—bangles and rings.* ■ used to refer in a condescending way to an attractive person: *six pretties in sequined leotards.*
 ▶ verb (**pretties, prettifying, prettied**) [with obj.] make pretty or attractive: *she'll be all prettied up and ready to go in an hour.*
 – PHRASES **pretty much** (or **nearly or well**) informal very nearly: *the case is pretty well over.* a **pretty penny** informal a large sum of money. **pretty please** used as a wheedling form of request. **be sitting pretty** informal be in an advantageous situation: *if she could get sponsors, she would be sitting pretty.*
 – DERIVATIVES **prettily** adverb, **prettiness** noun, **prettish** adjective.
 – ORIGIN Old English *prættig*; related to Middle Dutch *perich* 'brisk, clever', obsolete Dutch *prettig* 'humorous, sporty', from a West Germanic base meaning 'trick'. The sense development 'deceitful, cunning, clever, skilful, admirable, pleasing, nice' has parallels in adjectives such as *canny, fine, nice*, etc.
- pretty boy** ▶ noun informal, often derogatory a foppish or effeminate man.
- pretty-face wallaby** ▶ noun another term for **WHIPTAIL WALLABY**.
- pretzel** /'prets(ə)l/ ▶ noun a crisp biscuit baked in the form of a knot or stick and flavoured with salt.
 ▶ verb (**pretzels, pretzeling, pretzeled**) [with obj.] N. Amer. twist, bend, or contort: *he found the snake pretzeled into a tangle of knots.*
 – ORIGIN mid 19th cent. (originally US): from German *Pretzel*.
- prevail** ▶ verb [no obj.] 1 prove more powerful or superior: *it is hard for logic to prevail over emotion.* ■ be widespread or current in a particular area or at a particular time: *a friendly atmosphere prevailed among the crowds.*
 2 (**prevail on/upon**) persuade (someone) to do something: *she was prevailed upon to give an account of her work.*
 – ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin *praevalere* 'have greater power', from *prae* 'before' + *valere* 'have power'.
- prevailing** ▶ noun existing at a particular time; current: *the unfavourable prevailing economic conditions.* ■ having most appeal or influence; prevalent: *the prevailing mood within Whitehall circles.*
 – DERIVATIVES **prevailingly** adverb.
- prevailing wind** ▶ noun a wind from the direction that is predominant or most usual at a particular place or season.
- prevalence** ▶ noun [mass noun] the fact or condition of being prevalent; commonness: *the prevalence of obesity in adults.*
- prevalent** /'prev(ə)l(ə)nt/ ▶ adjective [attrib.] widespread in a particular area or at a particular time: *the social ills prevalent in society today.* ■ archaic predominant; powerful.
 – DERIVATIVES **prevalently** adverb.
 – ORIGIN late 16th cent.: from Latin *praevalent-* 'having greater power', from the verb *praevalere* (see **PREVAIL**).
- prevaricate** /prɪ'vərɪkeɪt/ ▶ verb [no obj.] speak or act in an evasive way: *he seemed to prevaricate when journalists asked pointed questions.*
 – DERIVATIVES **prevarication** noun, **prevaricator** noun.
 – ORIGIN mid 16th cent. (earlier (Middle English) as *prevarication* and *prevaricator*), in the sense 'go astray, transgress': from Latin *praevaricat-* 'walked crookedly, deviated', from the verb *praevaricari*, from *prae* 'before' + *varicari* 'straddle'.
- prevenient** /prɪ'vɪniənt/ ▶ adjective formal preceding in time or order; antecedent.
 – ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from Latin *praeveniens-* 'coming before', from the verb *praevenire*, from *prae* 'before' + *venire* 'come'.
- prevent** ▶ verb [with obj.] 1 keep (something) from happening: *action must be taken to prevent further accidents.* ■ stop (someone) from doing something: *locks won't prevent a determined burglar from getting in.*
 2 archaic (of God) go before (someone) with spiritual guidance and help.
 – DERIVATIVES **preventability** noun, **preventable** (also **preventible**) adjective.
- ORIGIN late Middle English (in the sense 'act in anticipation of'): from Latin *praevenit-* 'preceded, hindered', from the verb *praevenire*, from *prae* 'before' + *venire* 'come'.
- preventative** ▶ adjective & noun another term for **PREVENTIVE**.
 – DERIVATIVES **preventatively** adverb.
- preventer** ▶ noun a person or thing that prevents something: *a power-surge preventer.* ■ Sailing an extra line or wire rigged to support a piece of rigging under strain, or to hold the boom and prevent it from gybing.
- prevention** ▶ noun [mass noun] the action of stopping something from happening or arising: *crime prevention | the treatment and prevention of AIDS.*
 – PHRASES **prevention is better than cure** (or **US an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure**) proverb it's easier to stop something happening in the first place than to repair the damage after it has happened.
- preventive** ▶ adjective designed to keep something undesirable such as illness or harm from occurring: *preventive medicine.*
 ▶ noun a medicine or other treatment designed to prevent disease or ill health.
 – DERIVATIVES **preventively** adverb.
- preventive detention** ▶ noun [mass noun] law the imprisonment of a person with the aim of preventing them from committing further offences or of maintaining public order.
- preverbal** ▶ adjective 1 existing or occurring before the development of speech: *preverbal communication.*
 2 Grammar occurring before a verb: *preverbal particles.*
- preview** ▶ noun an opportunity to view something before it is acquired or becomes generally available: *I have photos of the goods if anyone would like a preview.* ■ a showing of a film, exhibition, etc. before its official opening. ■ a trailer for a film. ■ a publicity article or review of a forthcoming film, book, etc., based on an advance viewing. ■ Computing a facility for inspecting the appearance of a document before it is printed.
 ▶ verb [with obj.] display (a product, film, etc.) before it is made generally available: *the company will preview an enhanced version of its database.* ■ see or inspect (something) before it is used or becomes generally available: *the teacher should preview teaching aids to ensure that they are at the right level.* ■ comment on (a forthcoming event): *next week we'll be previewing the new season.*
 – DERIVATIVES **previewer** noun.
- Previn** /'prevmɪn/, André (George) (b.1929), German-born American conductor, pianist, and composer. He is most famous as a conductor, notably with the London Symphony Orchestra (1968–79), the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (1976–86), and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (1987–91).
- previous** ▶ adjective 1 [attrib.] existing or occurring before in time or order: *she looked tired after her exertions of the previous evening | the boat's previous owner.*
 2 informal overhasty in acting: *I admit I may have been a bit previous.*
 ▶ noun [mass noun] Brit. informal previous convictions; a criminal record: *he's got previous—theft and wounding.*
 – PHRASES **previous to** before: *the month previous to publication.*
 – ORIGIN early 17th cent.: from Latin *praevious* 'going before' (from *prae* 'before' + *via* 'way') + **-ous**.
- previously** ▶ adverb at a previous or earlier time; before: *museums and art galleries which had previously been open to the public | they discovered a previously unknown gene.*
- previous question** ▶ noun (in parliamentary procedure) a motion to decide whether to vote on a main question, moved before the main question itself is put.
- previse** /prɪ'vɪzɪz/ ▶ verb [with obj.] literary foresee or predict (an event): *he had intelligence to previse the possible future.*
 – DERIVATIVES **prevision** noun, **previsional** adjective.
 – ORIGIN late 16th cent.: from Latin *praevis-* 'foreseen, anticipated', from the verb *praevidere*, from *prae* 'before' + *videre* 'to see'.
- prevocalic** /,prɪ:və'kəlɪk/ ▶ adjective occurring immediately before a vowel.
- pre-vocational** ▶ adjective given or performed as preparation for vocational training.

constituency or party): *she became the first woman to represent a South Wales mining valley*. ■ act as a substitute for (someone), especially on an official occasion: *the Duke of Edinburgh was represented by the Countess Mountbatten*.

2 constitute; amount to: *this figure represents eleven per cent of the company's total sales*. ■ be a specimen or example of; typify: *twenty parents, picked to represent a cross section of Scottish life*. ■ (be represented) be present in something to a particular degree: *abstraction is well represented in this exhibition*.

3 depict (a particular subject) in a work of art: *santos are small wooden figures representing saints*. ■ (with obj. and adverbial or infinitive) describe or portray in a particular way: *the young were consistently represented as being in need of protection*. ■ (of a sign or symbol) have a particular signification; stand for: *numbers 1-15 represent the red balls*. ■ be a symbol or embodiment of: *the three heads of Cerberus represent the past, present, and future*. ■ play (a role) in a theatrical production.

4 formal state or point out clearly: *it was represented to him that she would be an unsuitable wife*. ■ (with clause) allege; claim: *the vendors have represented that such information is accurate*.

— DERIVATIVES **representability** noun, **representable** adjective.

— ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French *representer* or Latin *repraesentare*, from *re-* (expressing intensive force) + *praesentare* 'to present'.

re-present ► verb [with obj.] present (something) again, especially for further consideration or in an altered form: *I will re-present Bismeyer's model here*. ■ present (a cheque or bill) again for payment.

— DERIVATIVES **re-presentation** noun.

representation ► noun [mass noun] **1** the action of speaking or acting on behalf of someone or the state of being so represented: *you may qualify for free legal representation*. **2** the description or portrayal of someone or something in a particular way: *the representation of women in newspapers*. ■ the depiction of someone or something in a work of art: *Picasso is striving for some absolute representation of reality*. ■ [count noun] a picture, model, or other depiction of someone or something: *a striking representation of a vase of flowers*. ■ (in some theories of perception) a mental state or concept regarded as corresponding to a thing perceived.

3 (representations) formal statements made to an authority, especially so as to communicate an opinion or register a protest: *the Law Society will make representations to the Lord Chancellor*. ■ [count noun] a statement or allegation: *any buyer was relying on a representation that the tapes were genuine*.

— ORIGIN late Middle English (in the sense 'image, likeness'): from Old French *representation* or Latin *repraesentatio(n)-*, from *repraesentare* 'bring before, exhibit' (see **REPRESENT**).

representational ► adjective relating to or characterized by representation: *representational democracy*. ■ relating to or denoting art which aims to depict the physical appearance of things. Contrasted with **ABSTRACT**.

— DERIVATIVES **representationally** adverb.

representationalism ► noun [mass noun] **1** the practice or advocacy of representational art. **2** Philosophy another term for **REPRESENTATISM**.

— DERIVATIVES **representationalist** adjective & noun.

representationism ► noun [mass noun] Philosophy the doctrine that thought is the manipulation of mental representations which correspond to external states or objects.

— DERIVATIVES **representationist** noun.

representative ► adjective **1** typical of a class, group, or body of opinion: *Churchill was not properly representative of influential opinion in Britain*. ■ containing typical examples of many or all types: *a representative sample of young people in Scotland*. **2** (of a legislative assembly or deliberative body) consisting of people chosen to act and speak on behalf of a wider group. ■ (of a government or political system) based on elected or chosen representatives: *free elections and representative democracy*. **3** serving as a portrayal or symbol of something: *the show would be more representative of how women really are*. ■ (of art) representational: *the bust involves a high degree of representative abstraction*.

4 Philosophy relating to mental representation.

► noun **1** a person chosen or appointed to act or speak for another or others, in particular: ■ an agent of a firm who travels to potential clients to sell its prod-

ucts. ■ an employee of a travel company who lives in a resort and looks after the needs of its holidaymakers. ■ a person chosen or elected to speak and act on behalf of others in a legislative assembly or deliberative body. ■ a delegate who attends a conference, negotiations, etc., so as to represent the interests of another person or group. ■ a person who takes the place of another on an official occasion.

2 an example of a class or group: *fossil representatives of lampreys and hagfishes*.

— DERIVATIVES **representatively** adverb, **representativeness** noun.

repress ► verb [with obj.] subdue (someone or something) by force: *the uprisings were repressed*. ■ restrain, prevent, or inhibit (the expression or development of something): *Isabel couldn't repress a sharp cry of fear*. ■ suppress (a thought or desire) so that it becomes or remains unconscious: *the thought that he had killed his brother was so terrible that he repressed it*. ■ Biology prevent the transcription of (a gene).

— DERIVATIVES **repressor** noun, **repressible** adjective.

— ORIGIN Middle English (in the sense 'keep back something objectionable'): from Latin *repress-* 'pressed back, checked', from the verb *reprimere*, from *re-* 'back' + *primere* 'to press'.

repressed ► adjective restrained or oppressed: *repressed indigenous groups*. ■ (of a thought or desire) kept suppressed and unconscious in one's mind: *repressed homosexuality*. ■ characterized by the repression of thoughts or desires, especially sexual ones: *a very repressed, almost Victorian, household*.

repression ► noun [mass noun] the action of subduing someone or something by force. ■ the restraint, prevention, or inhibition of a feeling, quality, etc.: *the repression of anger can be positively harmful*. ■ the action or process of suppressing a thought or desire in oneself so that it remains unconscious.

repressive ► adjective (especially of a social or political system) inhibiting or restraining personal freedom: *a repressive regime*. ■ inhibiting or preventing the expression or awareness of thoughts or desires: *a repressive moral code*.

— DERIVATIVES **repressively** adverb, **repressiveness** noun.

repressor ► noun Biochemistry a substance which acts on an operon to inhibit enzyme synthesis.

reprice ► verb [with obj.] put a different price on (a product or commodity).

reprieve ► verb [with obj.] cancel or postpone the punishment of (someone, especially someone condemned to death): *under the new regime, prisoners under sentence of death were reprieved*. ■ abandon or postpone plans to close or abolish (something): *the threatened pits could be reprieved*.

► noun a cancellation or postponement of a punishment. ■ a cancellation or postponement of an undesirable event: *a mother who faced eviction has been given a reprieve*.

— ORIGIN late 15th cent. (as the past participle *reprieved*): from Anglo-Norman French *repris*, past participle of *reprandre*, from Latin *re-* 'back' + *prehendere* 'seize'. The insertion of *-v-* (16th cent.) remains unexplained. Sense development has undergone a reversal, from the early meaning 'send back to prison', via 'postpone a legal process', to the current sense 'rescue from impending punishment'.

reprimand /ˈreprɪmɑːnd/ ► noun a formal expression of disapproval.

► verb [with obj.] address a reprimand to: *officials were reprimanded for poor work*.

— ORIGIN mid 17th cent.: from French *réprimande*, via Spanish from Latin *reprimenda*, 'things to be held in check', neuter plural gerundive of *reprimere* (see **REPRESS**).

reprint ► verb [with obj.] print again or in a different form: *his book was reprinted several times after his death*.

► noun an act of printing more copies of a work. ■ a copy of a book or other material that has been reprinted. ■ an offprint.

— DERIVATIVES **reprinter** noun.

reprisal ► noun an act of retaliation: *three youths died in the reprisals which followed* [mass noun] the threat of reprisal. ■ [mass noun] historical the forcible seizure of a foreign subject or their goods as an act of retaliation.

— ORIGIN late Middle English: from Anglo-Norman French *reprisaille*, from medieval Latin *reprisalia* (neuter plural), based on Latin *repraehens-* 'seized',

from the verb *repraehendere* (see **REPREHEND**). The current sense dates from the early 18th cent.

reprise /rɪˈprɪz/ ► noun a repeated passage in music. ■ a repetition or further performance of something: *a stale reprise of past polemic*.

► verb [with obj.] repeat (a piece of music or a performance).

— ORIGIN early 18th cent.: French, literally 'taken up again', feminine past participle of *reprandre* (see **REPRIEVE**).

repro ► noun (pl. **repros**) [usu. as modifier] informal **1** a reproduction or copy, particularly of a piece of furniture: *a Georgian repro cabinet*. **2** [mass noun] the reproduction of a document or image: *in-house repro and some finishing*.

reproach ► verb [with obj.] express to (someone) one's disapproval or of disappointment in their actions: *her friends reproached her for not thinking enough about her family* [with direct speech] 'You know that isn't true,' he reproached her. ■ (**reproach someone with**) accuse someone of: *his wife reproached him with cowardice*. ■ archaic censure or rebuke (an offence).

► noun [mass noun] the expression of disapproval or disappointment: *he gave her a look of reproach* [count noun] a farrago of warnings and pained reproaches. ■ (**a reproach to**) a thing that makes the failings of (someone or something else) more apparent: *his elegance is a living reproach to our slovenly habits*. ■ (**Reproaches**) (in the Roman Catholic Church) a set of antiphons and responses for Good Friday representing the reproaches of Christ to his people.

— PHRASES **above (or beyond) reproach** such that no criticism can be made; perfect.

— DERIVATIVES **reproachable** adjective, **reproaching** adjective, **reproachingly** adverb.

— ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French *reprochie* (verb), from a base meaning 'bring back close', based on Latin *prope* 'near'.

reproachful ► adjective expressing disapproval or disappointment: *she gave him a reproachful look*.

— DERIVATIVES **reproachfully** adverb, **reproachfulness** noun.

reprobate /ˈrɛprəbeɪt/ ► noun **1** an unprincipled person. **2** archaic (in Calvinism) a sinner who is not of the elect and is predestined to damnation.

► adjective **1** unprincipled: *reprobate behaviour*. **2** archaic (in Calvinism) predestined to damnation.

► verb [with obj.] archaic express or feel disapproval of: *his neighbours reprobed his method of proceeding*.

— DERIVATIVES **reprobation** noun.

— ORIGIN late Middle English (as a verb): from Latin *reprobat-* 'disapproved', from the verb *reprobare*, from *re-* (expressing reversal) + *probare* 'approve'.

reprocess ► verb [with obj.] process (something, especially spent nuclear fuel) again or differently, typically in order to reuse it.

reproduce ► verb [with obj.] **1** produce a copy of: *his works are reproduced on postcards and posters*. ■ [no obj., with adverbial] be copied with a specified degree of success: *you'll be amazed to see how well half-tones reproduce*. ■ produce something very similar to (something else) in a different medium or context: *the problems are difficult to reproduce in the laboratory*. **2** (of an organism) produce offspring by a sexual or asexual process: *bacteria normally divide and reproduce themselves every twenty minutes* [no obj.] *an individual needs to avoid being eaten until it has reproduced*.

— DERIVATIVES **reproducer** noun, **reproducibility** noun, **reproducible** adjective, **reproducibly** adverb.

reproduction ► noun [mass noun] **1** the action or process of copying something: *the cost of colour reproduction in publication is high*. ■ [count noun] a copy of a work of art, especially a print or photograph of a painting. ■ [as modifier] made to imitate the style of an earlier period or of a particular craftsman: *reproduction French classical beds*. ■ the quality of reproduced sound: *the design was changed to allow louder reproduction*. **2** the production of offspring by a sexual or asexual process.

reproductive ► adjective relating to or effecting reproduction: *the female reproductive system*.

— DERIVATIVES **reproductively** adverb, **reproductiveness** noun, **reproductivity** noun.

reprogram (also **reprogramme**) ► verb (**reprograms, reprogramming, programmed**; US also **reprograms, reprogramming, reprogrammed**) [with obj.]